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ful, buoyant, resilient, as if, like the beloved of the gods, he was predestined to die young. Yet the supreme test was nobly borne, and to many of his pupils and colleagues, who see in the death of this great, benignant physician, the loss of their best friend, the expressions of ancient belief will not seem unavailing: *Requiem aeternam dona ei, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat ei.*

F. H. GARRISON

ARMY MEDICAL MUSEUM

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

A BOTANIC SCHOOL IN REGENT'S PARK

THE report of the committee appointed last April by Lord Ernle, the former president of the British Board of Agriculture, to consider what steps should be taken to improve the usefulness of the Royal Botanic Society in London, is now published and an abstract is given in the *London Times*. The members of the committee, all of whom sign the report, were: Lieutenant-Colonel Sir David Prain, F.R.S., director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (chairman); Sir W. H. Dunn; Surgeon-General Sir A. Keogh, Imperial College of Science and Technology; Sir Malcolm Morris; Major R. C. Carr; Mr. Morton Evans, joint secretary of the Office of Woods; Mr. H. J. Greenwood, L.C.C.; and Professor F. W. Keeble, F.R.S., Board of Agriculture and Fisheries and Royal Horticultural Society; with Mr. G. C. Gough, B.Sc., secretary.

The society was incorporated in 1839, and was granted a lease of 18 acres in Regent's Park until 1870. This lease was renewed by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests in 1870, and in 1901 at an increased rental. The present lease terminates in 1932.

The committee have formed the opinion that the Royal Botanic Society could be made more useful both from the scientific and educational point of view by the establishment of: (1) A school of economic botany, at which a knowledge of the economic plants and their products including those of tropical regions, might be obtained; (2) an institute which might be made a center for research, more especially in plant physiology where the living

plant is essential; (3) a center for teaching in horticulture, the students of which could receive their necessary training in pure science at existing London colleges; (4) courses in school gardening, at times suitable for teachers in elementary, continuation, and other schools. In addition, the committee consider that the gardens might extend their present utility as a center from which colleges and botany schools could be supplied with material for teaching and research, and in which students could make use of the existing facilities for the study of systematic botany.

In an appendix the committee deal with the financial side of the scheme. They consider that the suggestions need not entail, in their initial stages, any very great expenditure. Buildings should be of a temporary nature and of not more than two stories, and might be erected near the present greenhouses. After giving details of the laboratories and rooms required, the committee suggest that the staff should consist of the following:

A director at a salary of £800 to £1,000, able to cooperate with the teachers of botany in London, and with a knowledge of economic problems or of vegetable physiology. An assistant director, salary £500 to £700, to be appointed after the director. His knowledge should supplement that of the director—*e. g.*, if the former be an economic botanist the latter should be a physiological botanist. An assistant, salary £250 to £400, to act as curator of the museum and librarian, with a general knowledge of plant diseases. At least one of the officers should have a practical knowledge of the tropics, tropical plants, and their products.

The committee estimate the total cost of the staff, with attendants, etc., at £3,000 to £3,500 per annum; the cost of the buildings, £4,000; and the cost of equipment, including books, plants, etc., £500.

THE ATTITUDE OF GERMAN PHYSICIANS TOWARDS INHUMAN ACTION

IT will be remembered that a protest signed by M. Calmette and four other members of scientific organizations who had remained at Lille during the occupation by the Germans,

charged acts of inhumanity, saying in conclusion: "The high command in Germany willed the war, but the people in arms approved it, and resolutely waged war with the most ferociously cruel means, even the physicians with the army doing the most odious acts without a word of excuse, regret or pity." The *Deutsche, medizinische Wochenschrift* of April 10, 1919, as quoted in the *Journal* of the American Medical Association, related that the matter was brought up in the Berlin Medical Society, and Calmette's protest and the resolutions voted thereon by the Académie de médecine at Paris were discussed. Dr. Fuld offered a resolution that the society should go on record as expressing its regret at such happenings as were specified in the Calmette protest, but his suggestion was opposed by Orth and others, the speakers saying that there was no proof of the truth of the statements made by Calmette, and no voting should be done on a matter of which only one side had been presented. Finally a committee was appointed to report after obtaining an official copy of the resolutions that had been adopted by the Académie. The *Wochenschrift* of November 6, 1919, relates that this committee recently presented its report. It was in the form of a resolution which was adopted without a dissenting voice. The members of the committee were Fuld, Kraus, Krause, Morgenroth and Schwalbe, the latter the editor of the *Wochenschrift*. The resolution in translation reads:

The Berlin Medical Society is not in a position to pass judgment on the Manifesto of the Lille professors and the Académie de Médecine and on the published justification issued by the German authorities, entitled "Lille under German Rule and the Criticism of the Foe." But the society does not hesitate to declare openly that it condemns in the most unqualified manner all inhuman actions, wherever, whenever, and by whomsoever they may be committed. This attitude corresponds to the spirit of medicine always held high by the German medical profession, that really international spirit to which we are loyal and to which we assume all other physicians are loyal wherever they may be and to whatever nation they may belong.

CONFERENCE ON WASTE OF NATURAL GAS

A PUBLIC conference of governors, public utility commissioners, state geologists, home economic experts, natural gas companies, owners and officials, and appliance manufacturers has been called by Secretary of the Interior Lane to meet under the auspices of the Bureau of Mines at the Interior Department Building, Washington on January 15, to discuss the waste of natural gas in this country both by consumers and gas companies. As a result of the work of the experts of the bureau on this question, it is declared that in using natural gas the consumers through faulty appliances obtain an efficiency of about 13 per cent. from a gas cook stove, 25 per cent. from a house-heating furnace, and 10 per cent. from a hot-water heater, although in good practise these efficiencies can be trebled. Dr. Van H. Manning, director of the Bureau of Mines, writes in regard to the purposes of the conference:

Domestic consumers waste more than 80 per cent. of the gas received. The efficiency of most cooking and heating appliances could be trebled. By making natural gas worth saving the 2,400,000 domestic consumers in the United States could get the same cooking and heating service with one third the gas; that is, make one foot of gas do the work of three and greatly delay the day when the present supplies will be exhausted and consumers must go back to more expensive manufactured gas.

It is time for the public to take a new viewpoint on the waste of natural gas. It is time for the domestic consumer to realize that his duty is not done when he cries out against the flagrant wastes occurring in the gas fields and demands of his government that such wastes be abated; he must realize that he himself is likewise at fault and that it is time for him to set his own house in order. Furthermore, the domestic consumer must realize that these wastes do not concern him alone, and consequently he has not the right, merely because he pays for the gas, to employ it in any manner that pleases him, no matter how wasteful. Natural gas is a natural resource in which every inhabitant of this country has an equity. Those who waste the gas do so at the expense of those who would use it efficiently. Natural gas is not replaced by nature, and in comparison with the life